

Educational OUTREACH

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER 2007

Going the Distance!



Going the distance has many meanings. For the Division of Educational Outreach it means distance learning as close as your computer or continents away. It involves working with students on campus, regionally and around the world. Through distance learning we are challenged to provide learners access to the University's educational programs and resources in new and creative ways.

This issue is focused on international programs and students supported through Educational Outreach. As you read the various entries, one theme emerges: though at a distance, our students have a unique closeness to the University. The passion of our faculty, the determination and motivation of our students and the commitment of staff and administration to quality has created a bond that transcends program.

The greatest reward we can experience is in knowing that what we do makes a difference. We are renewed and rewarded by the successes and achievements of our students. As you read through these features may you find many rewards.

Patricia A. Brown

Patricia A. Brown, Dean
Educational Outreach

Commencement—An International Experience

by PAT BROWN

Commencement was held in Cali, Colombia in April for 21 graduate students in education administration. These graduates, all teachers at Colegio Bolivar, earned their Master of Arts in Education degree after several years of study that combined on-site and on-line instruction. Dean Michael Dougherty (CEAP) and I officiated at the ceremony held on the campus of Colegio Bolivar. Director Joseph Nagy lead the Commencement. Graduate Tom Rompf gave the student address. Dr. Burton Fox, Director of Latin American Programs assisted as I officiated. Dean Dougherty gave the commencement address.

Though far from our main campus, you could not help but feel connected through this new group of catamounts. Student Hilda Buitrago was not able to finish her coursework in time for the April

commencement. She came to campus as a Bowyer Scholar this summer and fulfilled all the requirements to graduate with the August commencement. Her excitement is captured in the photo taken of her with our catamount sculpture, pictured on page 5.

In July, it was off to Kingston, Jamaica. Dr. Beth Lofquist and I officiated at the commencement for 27 undergraduate students completing their bachelor of science in education degree.

Dr. Fox and Iva Bailey, our Jamaican Coordinator, handled logistics. Dr. Lofquist gave the commencement address. Doraine Reid gave a stirring presentation highlighting many of the life changing experiences associated with the program and studies on campus.

See Commencement, page 4



Cali, Columbia graduates

International Educators Continue Annual Summer Institutes on WCU Campus

By BURTON FOX

Once again the Division of Educational Outreach and the Inter-Regional Center, Inc. teamed to conduct an Educational Leadership Institute for American/International Educators.

The focus on the 2007 Institute, held on campus the week of June 25-29, was Physical Education, Health and Recreation. The combined efforts of Dean Patricia Brown, Division of Educational Outreach; Dr. Burton Fox, Director of Latin American/Caribbean Programs (WCU) and Director of the Inter-Regional Center, Inc.; and Dr. Susan Fouts, Director of Continuing Education brought this program to fruition.

The Institute was coordinated by Dr. David Claxton, at that time head of the Department of Health and Human Performance. Claxton, with the outstanding support of faculty Ben Tholkes, Maridy Troy, Bob Beaudet, Maurice Phipps, Justin Menickelli, Danny Williamson, Stephanie Dragon, Marvin Schade, Gayle Wells, and Otto Spilker provided a variety of activities and programs both in the classroom and on the field. Stephanie Little, North Carolina High School Physical Education Teacher of the Year, also provided a workshop for the participants.

Topics included:

Initiative games, teaching group exercise, sports education, outdoor education and adventure, disk games, athletics (track & field, volleyball, baseball), and aquatics.

Participants included:

Individual	School	Country
Jorge Mario Garcia	Colegio Bolivar	Colombia
Julio Antonio Osorio	Fund. Liceo Ingles	Colombia
Nidia Correal	Karl C. Parrish School	Colombia
Nestor Fontalvo	Karl C. Parrish School	Colombia
Alfredo DeLa Hoz	Karl C. Parrish School	Colombia
Juan Matos	American School of Santo Domingo	Dominican Republic
Oscar Zazo	Intl. School of Sosua	Dominican Republic
Diego Cabezas	American School of Quito	Ecuador
Jeff Escalante	American School of Quito	Ecuador
Raquel Rodriguez	American School of El Salvador	El Salvador
Jorge Lopez Ponciano	American School of Guatemala	Guatemala
Yamel Ortiz Ruiz	American School of Guatemala	Guatemala
Jean Eric Duval	Union School	Haiti
Dexter McFarlane	American School of Kingston	Jamaica
Mamady Konate	Hillel School	Jamaica
Cristina Sisniega Fink	American School Fundacion	Mexico
Ernesto Yanome	American School Fundacion	Mexico
Arturo Gonzales Sesma	Collegio Americano de Torreon	Mexico
Lional Rodriguez Rojas	Westhill Institute	Mexico
Jesus Borrás	Balboa Academy	Panama
Dean Ivancic	Balboa Academy	Panama
Leslie Scott, Jr.	Balboa Academy	Panama
Carlos Daniel	Intl. School of Panama	Panama

Similar institutes have been provided on campus since 1973. Titles have included: Guidance & Counseling, English as a Second Language, Differentiation of Instruction, Elementary Principalship, Secondary Principalship, Science & Literacy, Art Education, and Music Education, among others. Some institutes have been repeated over the

years depending on the need in the international school.

The institute planned for the summer of 2008 will focus on Early Childhood Education. Dr. Tom Oren will coordinate the program. International participants will be selected early next year.



Students enjoy one of the few indoor activities of the 2007 Summer Institute.

An IRC Journal

By SUSAN FOUTS

The sky is very blue, but I am still not enjoying how beautiful it is to be in the mountains. My mind is wandering, concerned with: is everyone's room ready, did I order all the food, how many lights will not work in the Norton Hall bathrooms? I park the state van and walk into the airport. The flight is late, but that isn't a surprise. I find a paper and wait.

About two hours later, the flight arrives. I stand at the flight exit with the "Western Carolina University" sign and wait. Then four men come out together, each beams with joy at the sign. Now it begins.

I am picking up the first group of Inter-Regional Council students who will spend the next week at Western Carolina University learning theory, techniques and strategies for teaching physical education to elementary, middle grade and high school students. These students come from 13 countries and 20 international schools.

This group of students, Jesús, Scott, and Dean are all from Panama and Juan from the Dominican Republic. I start toward Cullowhee. Before we get out of the parking lot, Jesús begins talking about how beautiful the mountains and the sky are here. He is a sponge, wanting to take in as much as possible and hopes that it doesn't get dark before we get to the University.

Each of my new friends has a million questions about what is going to happen in the next week. I share the schedule with them, a map of campus, and all of the other logistics that Educational Outreach and Health and Human Performance have been working to develop for weeks. I ask questions about their schools and their students and the hour to Cullowhee passes quickly.

When we arrive in Cullowhee, I help them find their way around campus and connect with the other IRC students. Most of them are listening to the dulcimer players at the Mountain Dulcimer Conference, which happens the same week.

The schedule for the next week is very intense, with Health and Human Performance filling every moment with



New friends Nestor Fontalvo and Leslie Scott, Jr., enjoy one of the learning moments during class.

learning and fun. Dr. Fox, our director of Latin American and Caribbean programs, hosts a reception the first night and the students are really late. I go to check on them and find them in Norton Hall having their pictures made with their new dulcimer-playing friends. I gather them up and we go to the reception. They meet most of the instructors that will share the next four days with them. The students are exhausted after class each day, but can't wait to attend the social event or find out more about the region and the University.

On Wednesday, we go to the Asheville Tourists game and have dinner at the ball field. An American baseball game is a treat and they are having a great time. As the announcer welcomes the students from the Inter-Regional Council and Western Carolina University, one of the Tourist players glances to see where that group is sitting. After the game, the player comes over and talks to the group.

He is from the Dominican Republic, and his nephew goes to Juan's school. We came back with signed balls and bats. It really is a small world.

Now it is Friday night; my twenty-eight new friends go home tomorrow. They share how much they have learned and how blessed they have been to come to this place and again how beautiful it is here. I think how blessed we are to have them share this week with us, how fortunate I am to get to work with Dr. Fox and the gifted faculty in Health and Human Performance.

On Saturday, they all go home with an email list of their classmates, but also my email. I look forward to every email about how they are using what they learned here and how much they enjoyed their stay with us or just the hello. With each email, I am thankful for this awesome week.

Going the Distance Sometimes Requires Staying in Place

by PAT BROWN

Jamaica is no stranger to hurricanes. Weather can be challenging especially for faculty scheduled to teach in late summer, early fall. Four of our faculty this summer were challenged by hurricane Dean. As the storm threatened the island, Dixie McGinty and John Habel were able to find a flight off island. But as you can imagine, nothing was on schedule and destination points were based on available flight options.

Two faculty members were left on island. Tom Oren found refuge in the Liguanea Club in Kingston while Zora Rhodes was at the El Greco in Montego Bay. Both weathered the storm well while we did our best to monitor what was happening. Their experiences triggered a number of actions at our end and we are now better positioned to deal with communication than before.

While we were a flutter stateside, Zora took note of the situation, explored her creativity and wrote "The Coming Storm." Calm and reason soon returned and Zora gathered her students together and continued with her course in the following week.



Commencement

Continued from page 1

A number of notable leaders participated in the program including Mr. Hopeton Henry, President of the Jamaican Teacher's Association and the Very Reverend Lawrence A. Burke, S.J. the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kingston. The Jamaican Constabulary Band led the processional and musical components of the event. Faculty in attendance included Drs. Eddi McCoy and Sharon Dole.

The students celebrated their milestone with a musical tribute that captured the emotions of the moment. The tribute "Strive" reflects the culture and spirit of these students. (*see lyrics to "Strive" on back page*)

Each commencement was a joyous occasion reflecting the accomplishments of each student, the pride of family and the comradeship among the student groups.



Dr. Michael Dougherty (left) and Dr. Pat Brown (not pictured) officiated at graduation ceremonies at Colegio Bolivar in Cali, Columbia.

The Coming Storm

By ZORA RHODES

A Magnificent Frigate-bird glides past me as I look out over the ocean from El Greco. It is also called the Man-o'-war bird because during the sailing days, it would occasionally perch on the tall masts of the ships coming to the tropics. With its long forked-tail, it turns for a brief moment into the sun displaying its crimson-red gular pouch and, thus, its masculinity. Like a huge black kite, it lifts itself high into the drifting white clouds on an eight-foot, dihedral-shaped wingspread. As a pirate, it sails around waiting to harass other sea birds to give up their catch!

Behind me, a Doctor bird hovers among the orange-red blossoms of the Poinciana. Its emerald-black, streamer tail glistens in the sunlight. A small bananaquit hisses as it darts like a yellow and black leaf in and out of the hibiscus. Below me, the turquoise waves splash softly on the shore. Nothing that I see portends the coming storm! The beautiful island of Jamaica lies tranquil in the Caribbean Sea waiting for the hurricane—awaiting the coming storm as it has for eons.

Like the evil of slavery, the storm brews from the East Coast of Africa. Forebodingly, it follows the same route as the slavers—the trade winds across the Atlantic. Approaching the West Indies, its swirling squalls strengthen its force as its penetrating eye becomes more powerful!

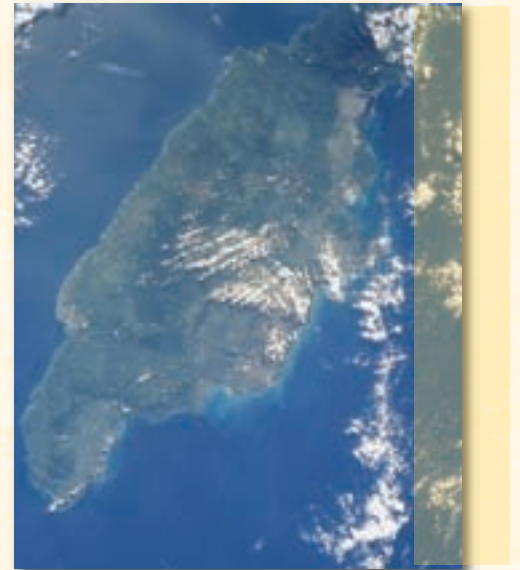
The ominous presence of this tempest, named Dean, begins as a slight breeze in the trees. Slowly, the palms start to wave their frond-shaped branches. As

the gales intensify, the royal palms begin to bend their upper flexible trunks back to face the prevailing winds. In arrogant defiance to the blasts, their leaves blow backwards like a model tossing her hair before a camera! Watching their display, I become aware of the palms' remarkable adaptations to these horrendous hurricanes.

Soon heavy rain pours from thick, black clouds and after awhile, subsides only to hit again with another band of outburst. A cacophony of wind, rain and pounding ocean waves swell into huge giants slashing sand from the shore!

The 145 mph gusts of wind from the eye howl and drench rain over the Blue Mountains, thus, eroding their lovely fern gullies. The downpour dissolves limestone as it bursts over the Cockpit Country, the stronghold of the brave Maroons. And like a Maroon warrior, the karst topography only stands taller and sharper from the assault!

The dissolving rain deepens the limestone caves which provide shelter from storms for Jamaican inhabitants from the past Arawaks, Spanish, and African Slaves to the present "One-People" of Jamaica. The caves also provide shelter for other creatures, such as bats which Jamaicans call "rat-bats." Also, seeking shelter is an endemic Jamaican frog which has evolved a very unique behavior by using the shelter of the cave to mate and to lay its eggs. After the female has guarded the eggs until hatching, the many young (around 50) cling to her back as she hops the long way out of the cave!



As night comes, Hurricane Dean begins to frighten everyone. The electric power is out, the streets are abandoned by curfew, and gunfire signals the potential looting to come. While others are having a "hurricane" party, listening to Reggae, and playing dominoes; I am imprisoned and hunkered down in my room like Bogie and Bacall in the movie, Key Largo. Only the calling tree frogs defy the howling storm!

Alas, the dreadful night is over and the storm has passed. The heavy, black clouds of the hurricane are moving westward towards the Yucatan Peninsula. As I step out on my balcony, I witness, as Noah did after the Great Deluge, a beautiful rainbow. God's blessing to Jamaica—the storm is not too damaging. And with its path of destruction, the storm is creating a new succession for the many endemic species of Jamaica and the West Indies as it has for thousand and thousands of years!

"My WCU stay has been one of the most wonderful and rewarding experiences of my entire life.

I hope this picture reminds you that here, in Cali, there is a Colombian catamount that will always think of you with gratitude in her heart."

Student Hilda Buitrago, Cali, Columbia, came to campus as a Bowyer Scholar to complete her degree. She graduated at the August commencement in Cullowhee.



Building a Borderless Community

By BRONWEN SHEFFIELD

"I can not attend classes during the day."

"I live too far away from the Cullowhee campus to drive to the university."

"I need a four-year degree to be promoted at work."

"I have never participated in an online course."

Sound familiar?

WCU extends its boundaries to serve the region by offering programs on community college campuses, at off-campus centers and through online instruction. Now adult learners have options that afford them flexibility in scheduling and instruction –but they may not have the technology skills to match. How do students prepare to be

distant learners? Who assists them in being successful students in the degree program or course of their choice? One tool utilized at WCU is the University Experience course which is designed to build a community of learners by placing students in an online learning environment before the beginning of their first semester.

What makes this course different from most entry-level, technology skill-building courses?

The course focus is on building relationships through collaborative learning. WCU administrative and faculty members who are knowledgeable in student services, program requirements, and online instruction facilitate the course. Facilitators introduce students to online resources, assist students in completing assignments that introduce students to online course features, facilitate collaborative learning using mentoring and group activities, address programmatic issues, and provide a learner-driven experience. The learning modules are presented in a frequently-asked-question format that appeals to the learner and offers an easy exchange of information.

Offered since spring 2005, the undergraduate course (UE 101) serves students who are enrolled in distance learning programs and/or courses. Offered since fall 2006, the graduate course also is a zero-credit-hour course (UE 501) but it serves new graduate students in resident and distance learning programs and/or courses. The student transcript records that the student participated in the course and contains the awarded satisfactory or unsatisfactory grade.

For more information or to volunteer to be a facilitator for the course contact:

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866-928-4723 (toll free)

828-227-3074 (direct line)





What are the long term benefits to the university and the students?

The long-term effects are varied. Students build relationships with the fellow classmates. Faculty members relay important program information prior to the beginning of the semester. Students connect with their advisors. Facilitators address basic student services questions so students come prepared for regular classes. IT Help Desk staff may address computer requirement issues and technology concerns to prevent students' loss of valuable time in a regular course. Telephone lines ring less. Empowered students may find answers to questions in the evening hours and on the week-ends without needing assistance from university personnel. Ultimately, students experience success in their programs or courses and students graduate with a degree from Western Carolina University. WCU meets the goal of serving our region by offering students programs and courses that meet their needs.

What are some of the students' comments?

Each semester the students enrolled in the courses complete a survey implemented via the Ultimate Survey software. The feedback validates the impact of the course and provides information for redesigning subsequent courses. In fall 2007, 144 out of 194 undergraduate students and 198 out of 283 graduate students responded to the survey.

Some of the student comments are:

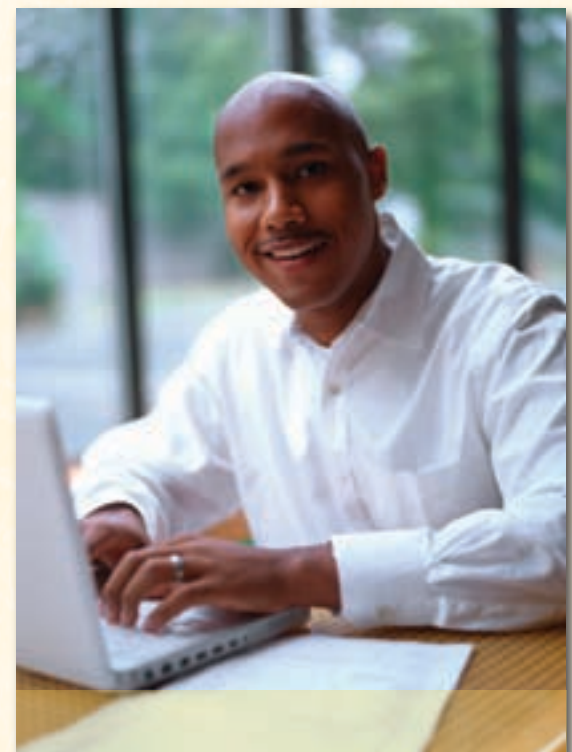
- This course gave me the opportunity to work out some minor computer problems before the fall classes began.
- Overall, the course was a joy. The interaction with students was refreshing.
- I was impressed with the design of this learning experience course. It is nice to be able to access a course like this when you are new at being an online student.
- I have taken online classes through Blackboard and Campus Cruiser for the past two years, but the setup on the UE class has been much more user-friendly.
- This is an excellent course for showing incoming students what is expected in an online learning environment. After reading the syllabus and exploring the site,

I was able to complete all the assignments easily without the necessity of requesting technical assistance.

- I was able to learn about students also going through the orientation, able to learn about WebCAT and the blackboard system and received positive feedback from the facilitators.
- The course was helpful in introducing students to the WCU website and how to navigate it when attempting to locate particular information

How is the survey feedback used?

The feedback helps identify any frustration students may feel when they are entering the university. For example, students must navigate multiple systems such as My Cat (WCU information portal) and WebCAT (the course management platform). A team of professionals who have served as facilitators meet and discuss the feedback to plan for the next course. Improvements are made to the directions for assignments and the communication with the students prior to the course. Some programs supplement the course with the face-to-face orientations as a means to share additional information not included in the University Experience course and involve more faculty members in the courses. Course components that students have requested are added in order to tailor the course to meet student needs.





Strive

by SHINEHEAD

Patois interpretation by Carol Burton

Presented as a tribute by WCU's Kingston,
Jamaica graduates during commencement

Sometimes it's hard but try and you'll make it.

Believe you me.

In order to achieve go forth and take it, set yourself free.

With obstacles in your way you may fall before you rise.

But if you really want good you nose haffi run(1) so get up and keep your eyes on the prize.

So as part of the plan you fi have ambition(2)

An the almighty as you foundation.(3)

Nuh badda get rich an switch because that's definitely wrong(4)

Don't forget yu(5) friends and where you come from.

If you a thief, thief remember God nah sleep,(6)

An although yuh rob a man an you get weh last week.(7)

You a pallaf outa street but you beating going sweet.(8)

Because God anuh silent river an Jah know him run deep.(9)

Throughout history lots of great men and women went about things the old fashion way,
they just kept on winning and winning.

So... strive step up in life and go for what you know.

You've got to strive, remove the doubt from out your minds and let good flow.(10)

- 1 If you want to succeed, you have to sacrifice a little
- 2 You need to develop ambition as a part of your plan
- 3 You need to rely on God as your strength
- 4 Don't get wealthy and then change who you are—it is wrong
- 5 Your
- 6 Don't steal because God is always watching you—he never sleeps
- 7 Because even though you robbed someone last week and got away with it
- 8 And were playing in the streets, it won't be pleasant when it catches up with you
- 9 Because God isn't a silent river and knows still waters run deep
- 10 So, put your best foot forward and go for it. You have to try hard/strive, don't give in to self-doubt, and allow all the good to emerge from within you.

Educational OUTREACH

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